

# Deer Park 2035 Vision Plan



# BUSINESS DISTRICT PLAN

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DEER PARK 2035 VISION PLAN

### Introduction to the Business District Plan

The Business District Plan conveys the community's vision for how commercial development should fit into the landscape and contribute to the character and quality of life of the City of Deer Park. At the same time, the Business District Plan also respects and supports the efforts of those proposing projects in the City's designated business districts, those who bear the risks and devote personal time and resources to commercial endeavors. As such, the strength of the Business District Plan and the recommended guidelines derive from:

- (1) A clearly articulated overall land use and design vision for commercial and mixed-use development in the Blue Ash, Galbraith Road and Plainfield Road corridor areas, and
- (2) Providing room for flexibility and common sense solutions for individual projects.

Successful implementation of the recommended Business District Guidelines will require collaboration and cooperation between those proposing commercial and mixed-use projects, and the Deer Park officials and staff charged with reviewing and approving them. As such, the proposed Business District Guidelines should be viewed as a "framework" for dialogue that sheds light on expectations and opportunities during the development review process, for all parties involved. In the end, the Business District Guidelines are about creating high quality settings in the City that provide for economic opportunity and innovation, while strengthening the City's quality of life and "unique sense of place" for years to come.

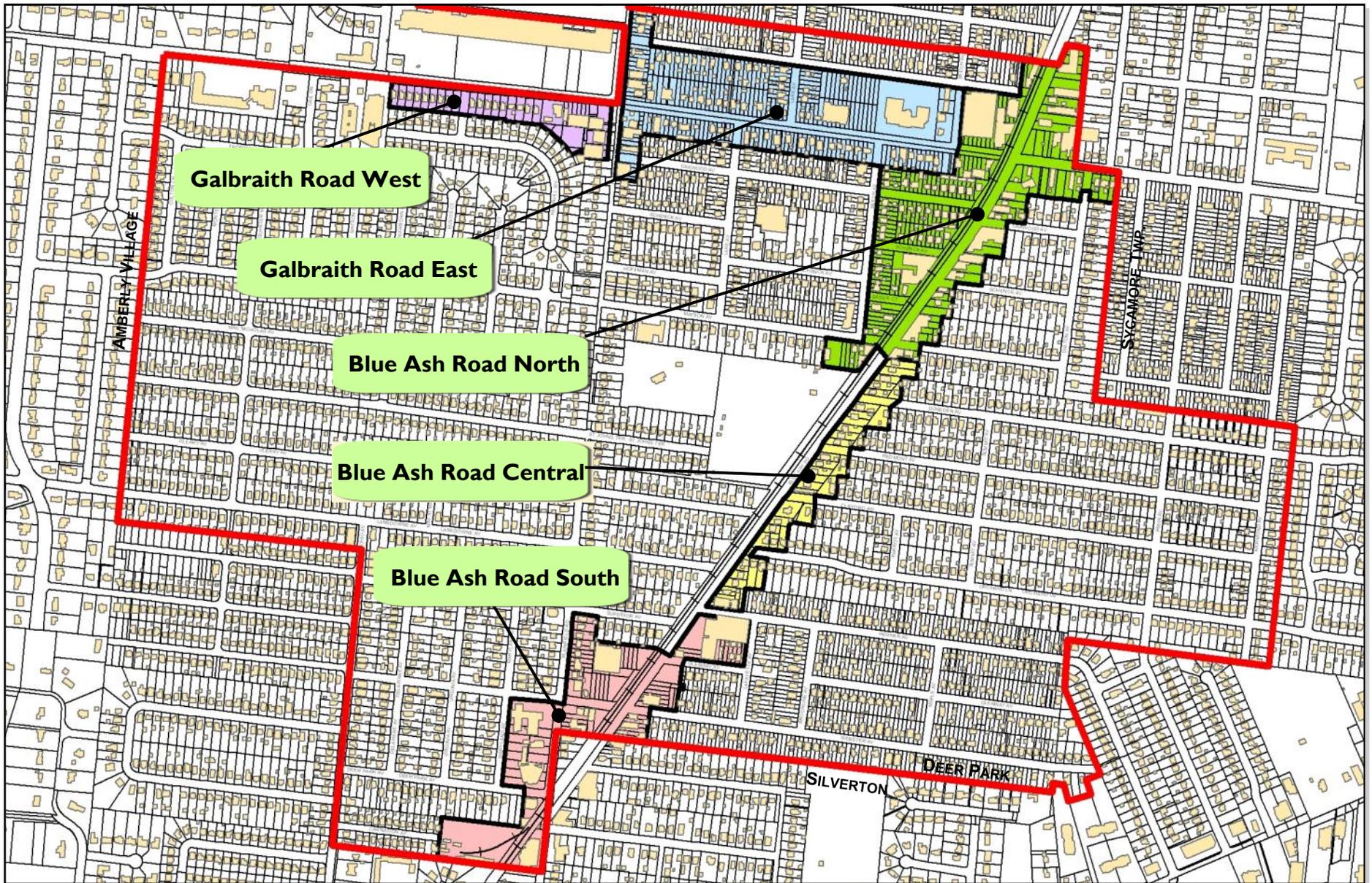
### The Vision for Redevelopment

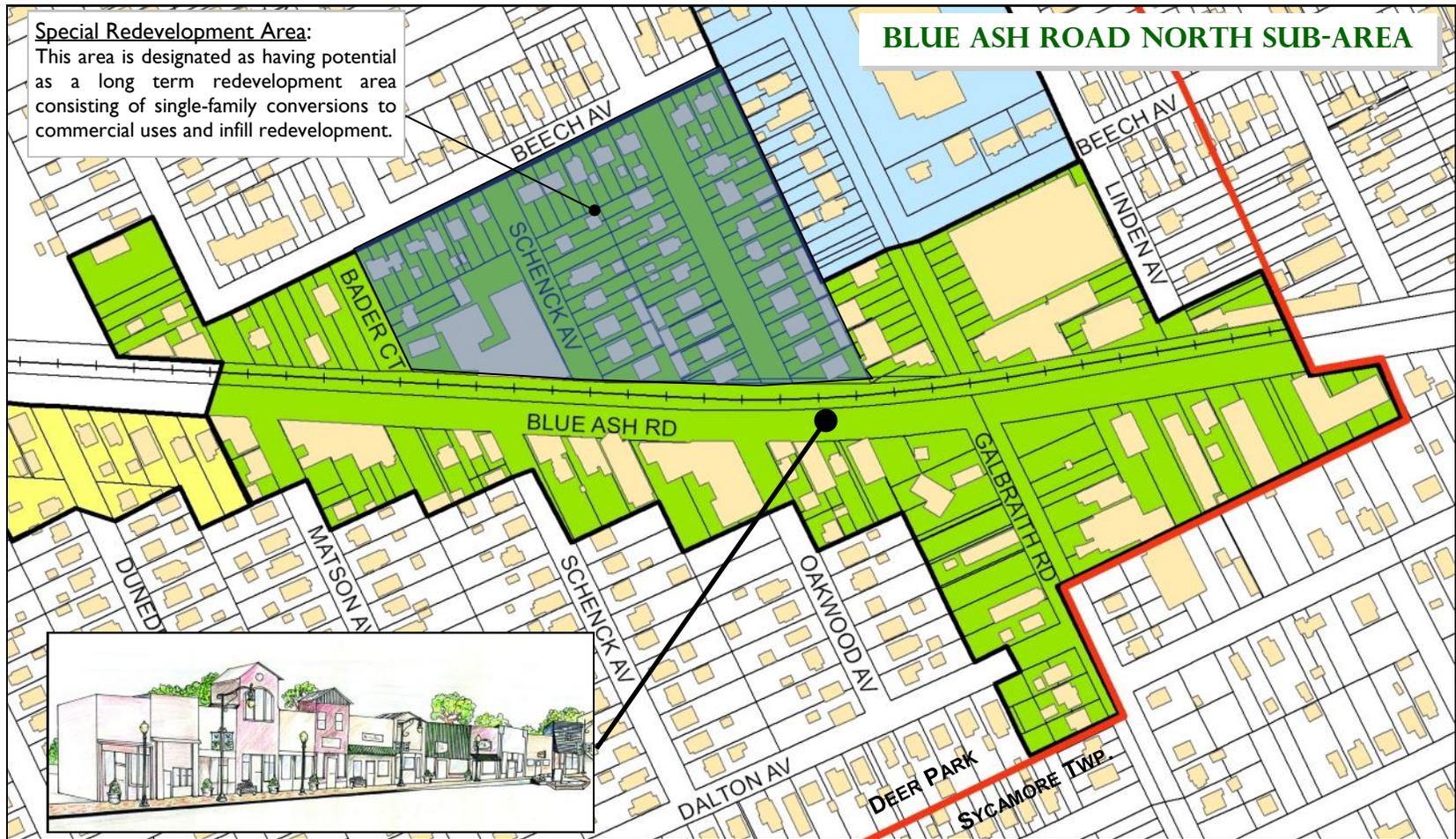
The Deer Park Business District is expected to redevelop as a destination shopping and entertainment area providing personal services, dining and entertainment options and mixed-use residential development. Residential development in these defined planning areas is expected to support urban scale multi-family projects at higher densities, consistent with the policies set forth in this chapter. Projects in the Business District are expected to incorporate mixed-uses including retail, office, residential, and service uses that support pedestrian transit and further the synergism of public and private sector activities. In the surrounding residential neighborhoods, infill urban scale townhouse and multi-family residential developments are anticipated. Site planning and streetscape infrastructure improvements will help promote a pedestrian scale environment and amenities.



Rendering of the Proposed Blue Ash Road North Business District Gateway

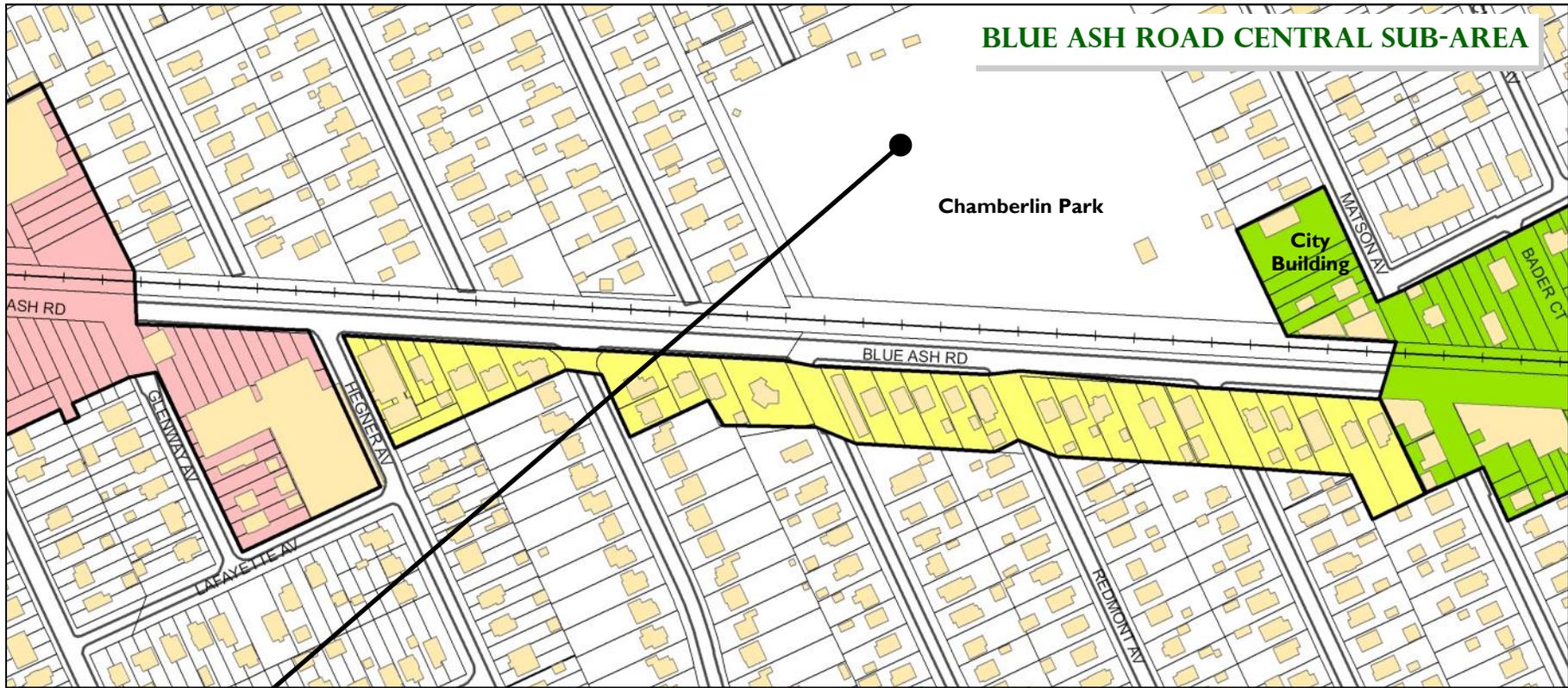
DEER PARK BUSINESS DISTRICT PLANNING SUB-AREAS





**Sub-Area Development Strategies**

- The Blue Ash Road Sub-Area has been targeted for the first phase of streetscape improvements given it's existing business district core establishments and the significance of the Blue Ash Road and Galbraith Road intersection. The proposed streetscape project will create the necessary safety and infrastructure improvements needed to drive the transformation of this business district. See Page 33 for additional information on the proposed project.
- This planning sub-area contains mostly low intensity commercial and service uses found in both commercial structures and residential structures converted to a commercial use. Flexible zoning regulations for application in this district were implemented in 2008. These zoning standards should provide the framework to promote a true mixed-use environment containing upper level residential units and pedestrian oriented scale design applied to any redevelopment activity.
- This sub-area is recognized as the initial redevelopment area for the City given the existing concentration of businesses and commercial structures. In conjunction with a Phase I streetscape program and the implementation of design guidelines and flexible zoning regulations to promote mixed-uses, other issues must be addressed including creating more parking opportunities and implementing pro-active façade improvement programs and incentives to transform this area.

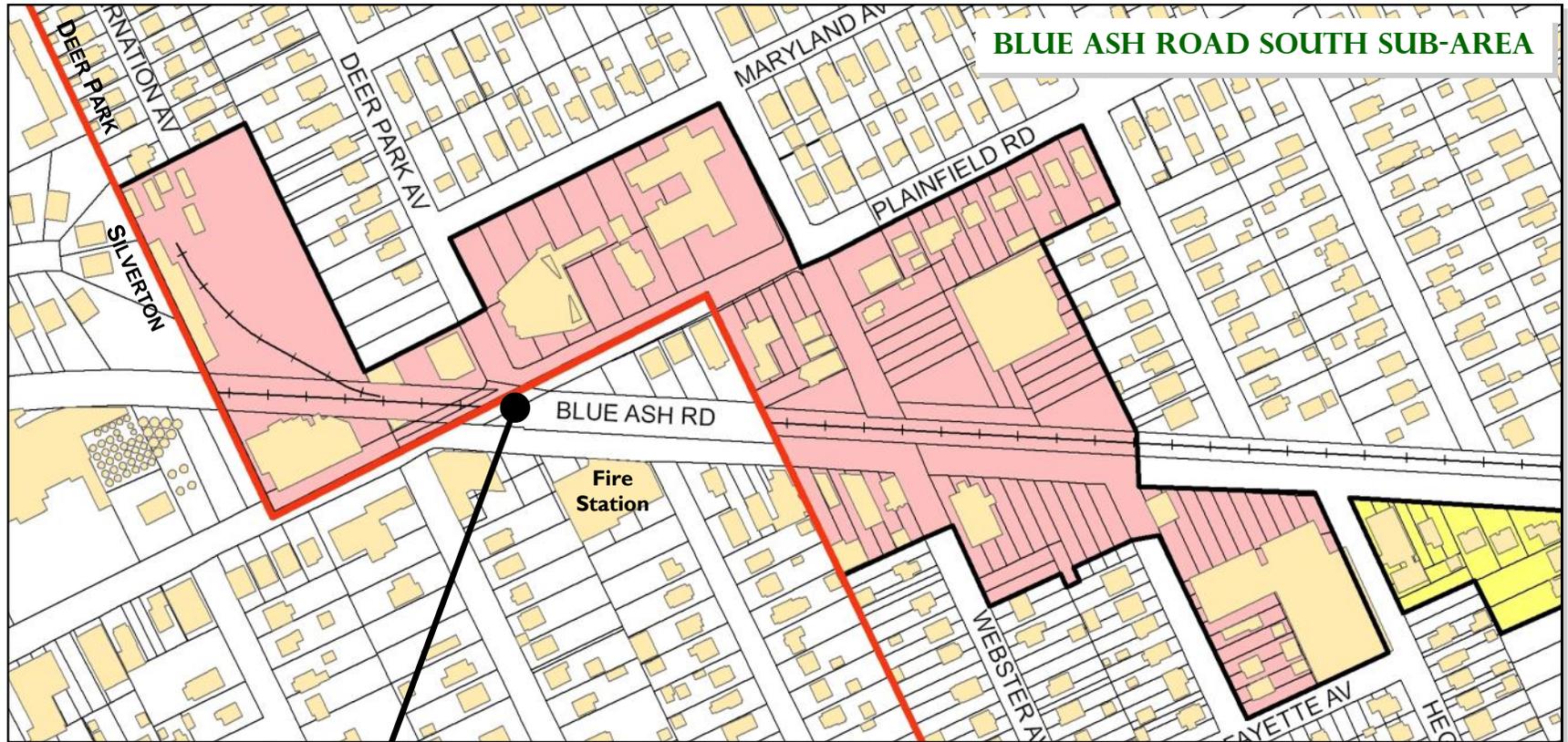


**Chamberlin Park**

Chamberlin Park is one of Deer Park’s greatest assets and should be preserved and enhanced to compliment corridor revitalization efforts. The central location of this facility can be leveraged to create increased pedestrian foot traffic for the businesses located along Blue Ash Road. Attention should be given to creating a safe and identifiable pedestrian environment to promote increased movement of people from the park to the Business District and vice versa.

**Sub-Area Development Strategies**

- This sub-area consists of residential dwellings with the exception of two business located at the corner of Blue Ash Road and Clifford Road. The plan for this sub-area is to provide for future residential redevelopment opportunities consisting of new single family or multi-family units.
- The targeted style of residential dwellings is small scale single-family residential or townhome style designs. Residential structures should be encouraged to be located near the public right-of-way to compliment the pedestrian oriented streetscape of the commercial oriented sub-areas located to the north and south of this planning district.
- A planned residential zoning district was applied to the yellow shaded parcels in the above diagram in 2008. The planned residential zoning standards set forth the specific type, scale and quality of the targeted multi-family dwelling products. Uniform architectural standards and exterior material guidelines have been incorporated into this planned zoning district which provides for traditional oriented structures with an emphasis on natural exterior materials consistent with those requirements in the other planning sub-areas.
- Streetscape improvements should be considered for both sides of the street along Blue Ash Road within this sub-area. The streetscape for the eastern side of Blue Ash Road should compliment the Phase I streetscape work in the northern sub-area in terms of street trees, street lights and street banners. Pedestrian friendly improvements should also be continued into this sub-area including the construction of curb bump-outs and textured crosswalks located at strategic intersections to promote connectivity to Chamberlin Park.



#### Sub-Area Development Strategies

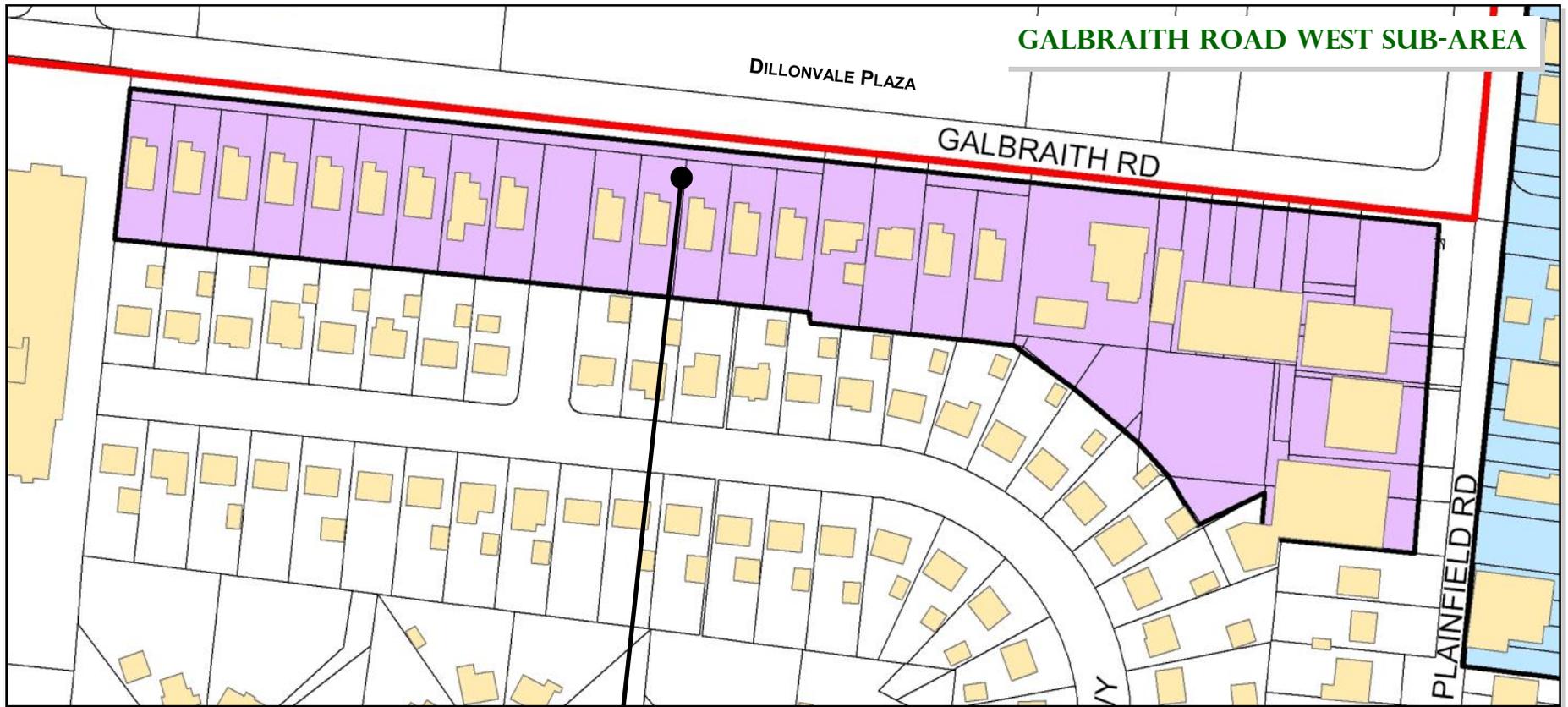
- This planning sub-area maintains a unique land use pattern involving lower density commercial development. The land uses are primarily commercial and institutional or public in nature.
- Within this planning district, opportunities exist for assembling several parcels of land to create a developable and marketable site. Programs such as the Ohio Neighborhood Stabilization Program and Urban Land Assistance Program should be considered to assist in redeveloping sites that require demolition of existing structures.
- The City should explore the incorporation of adaptive reuse guidelines into the zoning code to provide flexibility for redeveloping the existing structures in this district. Design guidelines have been implemented within this MUB Mixed Use Business zoning district that promote façade rehabilitation efforts for structure undergoing redevelopment.
- Consideration should be given to facilitating joint infrastructure improvement projects with the Village of Silverton in the planning district in order to promote a more defined gateway entrance along Blue Ash Road at the corporation line.



Existing Galbraith Road and Plainfield Road Intersection

**Sub-Area Development Strategies**

- This planning area features predominantly single-family dwellings with a commercial node at the Plainfield Road and Galbraith Road intersection. Adaptive reuse zoning regulations allowing for the conversion of these dwellings into commercial and office uses should be implemented.
- Signage controls in this sub-area should continue to be enforced using the 2008 sign code standards as adopted by City Council.
- The City should explore future joint construction projects with Sycamore Township regarding improvements to the Plainfield Road and Galbraith Road intersection. The northwest quadrant is situated in Sycamore Township and contains a large strip retail development (Dillonvale Plaza). A redeveloped UDF retail site was completed in 2012 which can be a catalyst for future redevelopment in this planning district.
- Upgraded traffic signal mast arms, textured crosswalks and wayfinding and signage elements should be considered for this intersection.



**Sub-Area Development Strategies**

- This planning area consists of single-family dwellings and commercial structures at the southwest quadrant of the Galbraith Road and Plainfield Road intersection.
- The dwellings included in this sub-area are identified as having long term potential for adaptive reuse through conversions to small scale retail or professional office uses. These homes are bound by commercial, institutional and the Dillonvale Plaza on three side respectively; with the south side being adjacent to a single-family neighborhood.

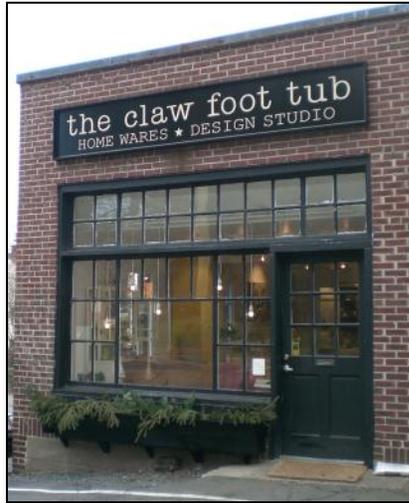
The existing character of this sub-area is a transitional zone from higher intensity commercial uses to lower intensity single-family residential dwellings. If commercial conversions of the dwellings take place, a parking strategy is required to create adequate customer and employee parking along Galbraith Road.

**Preferred Business District Land Use Mix**

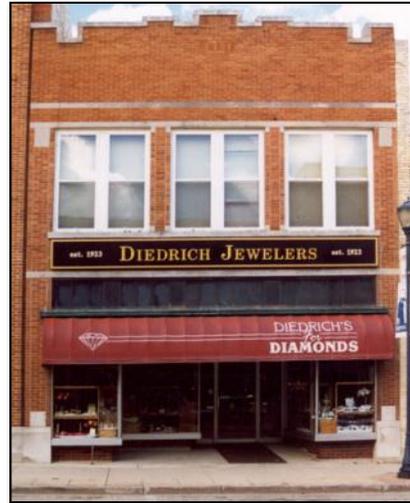
**Neighborhood Commercial Uses**

The revitalization of the Business District will likely include a combination of the adaptive reuse of existing structures and the redevelopment of parcels requiring the demolition of one or more buildings along the corridors.

Neighborhood commercial land uses should be promoted in the business district areas. These type of businesses feature small scale and niche products and services that appeal to both the local and broader regional market. As part of the strategy of creating a unique shopping and entertainment experience in the Business District, other plan elements should be incorporated such as a public art program and planning joint events between the Business District and Chamberlin Park.



*The photo represents a converted retail storefront featuring a brick exterior and substantial windows to provide the preferred amount of transparency.*



*This building illustrates a two-story commercial structure incorporating ground level retail and second story office land uses.*



*A component of the Business District focuses on promoting destination oriented entertainment establishments. These establishments help create the necessary critical mass of pedestrian foot traffic required for the District to support other after hour businesses.*

**Residential Uses**

New residential construction is targeted for the Blue Ash Central sub-area. This sub-area offers a break between the commercial nodes located to the north and south along Blue Ash Road. This area also provides aesthetic views of Chamberlin Park that may encourage the availability of 2nd and 3rd story balconies. Attached or detached town home style dwellings are the preferred housing type in order to maintain the proper medium residential densities and to take advantage of zero lot line site development.



*Attached Walk-Up "Brownstone" style dwellings work well within Deer Park's limited depth lots along the Blue Ash Road Corridor.*



*Attached townhome style condominiums with limited front yard depths are encouraged in the Blue Ash Road Central Sub-Area.*



*Detached two or three story townhome style dwelling units represent another option for the Blue Ash Road Central Sub-Area. Flexibility must be provided for front, side and rear yard setbacks as well as allowing on-street parking to count toward the project parking space requirements.*

**Mixed-Use Development**

A primary objective of the Business District land use plan is to create opportunities for a mixed-use corridor including a residential component. Flexible zoning regulations must be adopted to support the residential densities required for mixed-use projects to succeed in today's marketplace. Regulations should also address shared parking requirements, reduced or no setback provisions and height limitations to maintain the context of the corridor areas.

In this district, first floor land uses should be reserved exclusively for commercial, retail and office businesses. The second and third floor should provide opportunities for office, professional services and residential options. This strategy aims to transform this district into a destination location for both future visitors and residents.

**Strip Retail Development**

Conventional strip retail developments featuring minimal architectural character and large parking areas in front of the commercial space should be avoided. Attached commercial developments should be properly planned to blend in with the surrounding streetscape and conform to the targeted design themes for the Business District. Elements to address in a zoning code update should include requiring architectural roof enhancements when flat roofs are proposed, minimizing the amount of parking area located in front of the structure and placing the buildings near the street to help create a uniform streetscape and promote pedestrian activity. Other architectural elements should be considered including designs that break up the front elevation of the structure and the use of non-standard window designs on the front façade.



*This photo represents good use of incorporating architectural elements into a two-story mixed use building through use of awnings, high window transparency ratios and prominent front door features.*

**Preferred Business District Land Use Mix**



*This two-story mixed use building serves as a good example of site design by placing the front door at an angle with the intersection to optimize pedestrian / vehicular visibility while promoting an inviting pedestrian environment.*



*This rendering depicts good use of architectural building elements and varying roof lines to break up the normally linear façade of a traditional strip retail style development. This site features varying awning placement and design in addition to creating a green buffer area between the parking lot and the streetscape. Parking in the front of a strip style development should be limited and allowed only if the site meets standards for creating a context sensitive streetscape within the area between the parking and sidewalk.*



*This strip-style retail site represents effective application of different natural exterior materials and architectural elements to create a façade with character. This building also creates a unique character by offering varying storefront designs for each tenant space. This type of design approach should be required for future strip-style commercial and retail developments in Deer Park. This approach also allows for flexibility for varying uses within the same structure since the façade design essentially creates the illusion of separate and distinct spaces.*

## Creating a Vibrant Streetscape for the Business District

Design features and strategies that present attractive and interesting environments to customers, investors in the community, and existing and future tenants enhance business potential and economic viability. Businesses such as restaurants, markets, cafes, specialty stores, and professional services are more attractive to patrons when interesting window displays, large sidewalk-level openings, and attractive night lighting and tasteful advertising are present.

Business environments are enhanced by pedestrian amenities such as weather protection, shade, seating areas, safe crosswalks and places to gather, rest, and relax. Together, these elements provide for a vibrant streetscape.



## Business District Streetscape Plan

### Streetscape Design Visioning Exercise

The original 2008 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee conducted a visioning exercise designed to generate input and ideas on the elements of a future Blue Ash Road and Galbraith Road Streetscape project. A visual preference survey was utilized to assist the Steering Committee in studying different examples of urban design principals in built streetscape environments. Below is a summary of the visioning exercise recommendations:

- Construct medians with trees on Blue Ash and Galbraith Roads and remove portions of parallel parking.
- Upgrade traffic signal mast arms.
- Use textured or raised crosswalks at Blue Ash and Galbraith Roads, and Galbraith and Plainfield Roads.
- Seek assistance for funding from railroad company (re: landscaping on rail side).
- Combine some benches and planters to form single element and gathering space opportunities.
- Recommend a sidewalk replacement program on Blue Ash Road.
- Utilize night-time decorative lights and holiday lights in corridor areas.
- Extend the City building street landscaping down Blue Ash Road.
- Create a bike path along the Chamberlin Park side of tracks to enhance street beautification.
- Place fencing along rail tracks to serve as visual screen.
- Install curb bump outs on the east side of Blue Ash Road.
- Place curb bump outs on both sides of street, near the crosswalks to provide crossing points.
- Acquire other corners of Galbraith Road & Blue Ash Road intersection for future redevelopment.
- Rezone most of Galbraith Rd. to office to match existing and planned Galbraith Rd. development neighboring in Sycamore Township.

Preferred Streetscape Elements

Unique street banner attached to a decorative street light pole.

Two and three story mixed use structures feature the use of masonry exterior materials, and buildings utilize architectural details to break up flat roof lines. Faux balconies are an effective architectural element to create a traditional main street experience.

Upgraded traffic signal mast arms incorporating dual street light fixtures reduce visual clutter in the streetscape.

The use of durable cloth awnings adds unique character to the structure and also adds to a pedestrian friendly experience by providing shelter in poor weather.



Streetscape is given character by a public clock feature.

Brick pavers used in the crosswalk and intersection areas serve both as a traffic calming device and provide unique character to the streetscape.

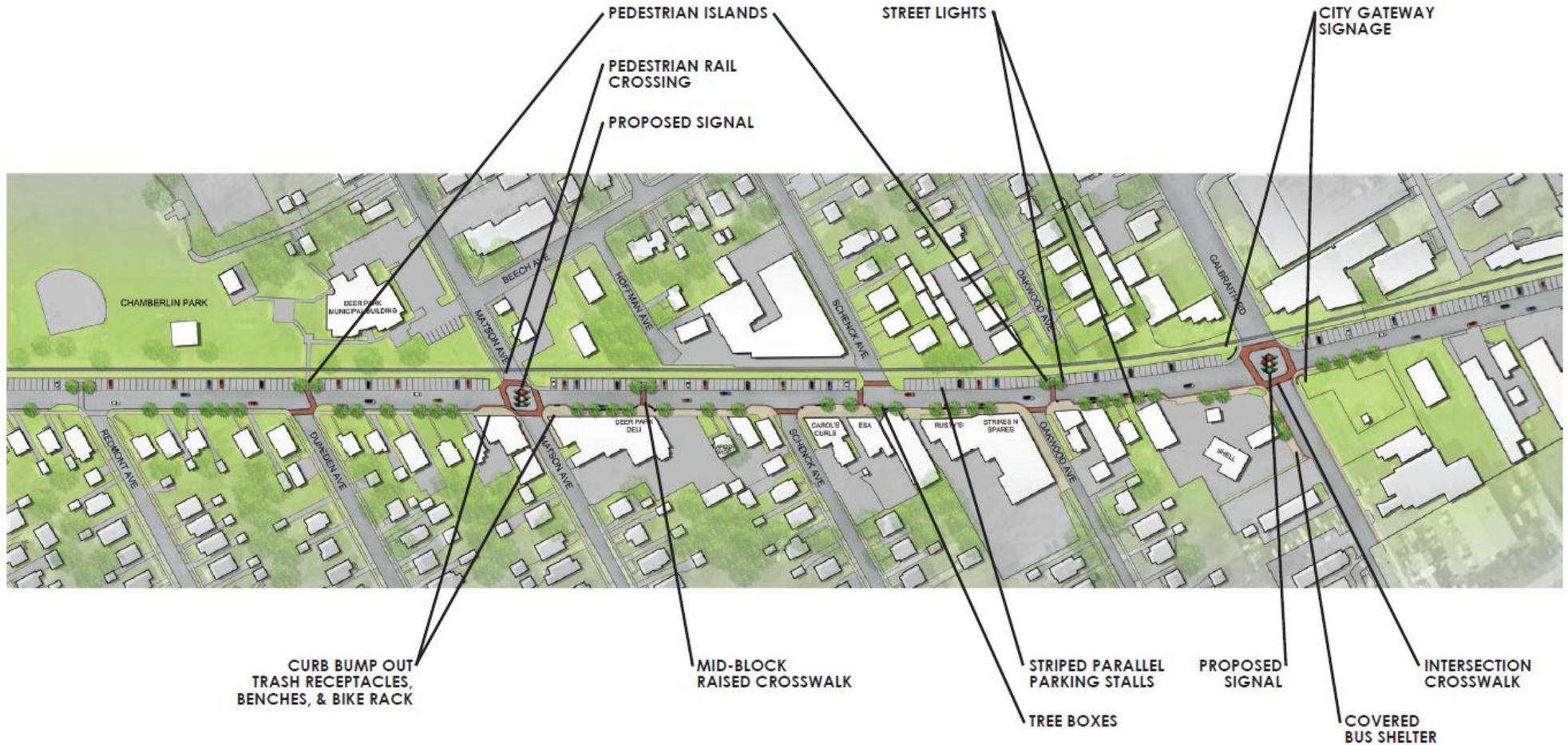
Brick pavers are utilized at interval points along the sidewalk to break up the solid concrete look and feel.

A sidewalk sandwich board is used to advertise special events and help create a pedestrian friendly environment.

1st floor commercial spaces feature high percentages of window transparency which promotes pedestrian activity and allows tenants to showcase internal uses.

The placement of a decorative bollard serves as a distinctive street furnishing and focal point for the cross walk area.

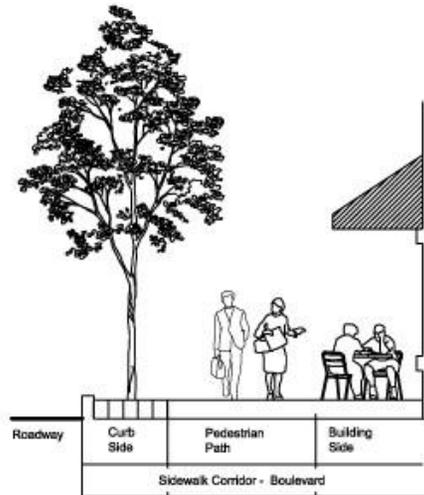
BLUE ASH ROAD IMPROVEMENT PLAN - NORTH SUB-AREA



BLUE ASH ROAD - TYPICAL DESIGN FEATURES

Streetscape Strategies

Pedestrian Zones



Providing adequate area for pedestrian walkways and other pedestrian oriented elements is critical to creating a successful streetscape. The suggested first phase of the Business District’s streetscape plan calls for the widening of specified sidewalk areas along the east side of Blue Ash Road beginning at Galbraith Road and terminating at Matson Road. The right-of-way is very narrow in these areas. To create additional pedestrian zones, some of the on-street parallel parking is converted to sidewalk. Pedestrian friendly elements should be targeted including sitting areas, wide planters that also serve as a sitting element, and providing the zoning flexibility required to promote outdoor dining areas located within the new pedestrian zones.

Creative Planting Locations



Plantings may be placed on existing structures as shown in this photo. This technique provides the “greening” of a streetscape while preserving space within the sidewalk pedestrian zones. Placing this vegetation slightly above the pedestrian view level draws attention away from other, higher placed objects within the streetscape such as utility poles and power lines. This represents an effective method to divert pedestrian and vehicular passenger attention away from the utility poles, power lines and railroad crossing equipment on both the Blue Ash Road and Galbraith Road corridors.

Multi-Purpose Tree Planters



This photo represents good use of a large tree planter as it also serves as a convenient sitting place for pedestrians. Its’ size and proximity to the street also transform the planter into a barrier from the public street which increases the perception of a safe and inviting pedestrian streetscape.

Creating Gathering Spaces



Public gathering spaces can be created by the placement, orientation and selection of streetscape seating options. Decorative benches should be considered for every block within the Phase I streetscape plan where feasible. Decorative planters may also be added to these gathering places as a means to create a unique place that catches the attention of pedestrians.

## Creating a Walkable Business District

### Sidewalk Cafes



Encouraging sidewalk dining areas is an effective way to create the perception of a pedestrian friendly business district. Sidewalk dining areas should be regulated as they are typically permitted to be located within the public right-of-way areas. The most likely location for these outdoor dining options are along the Blue Ash Road Corridor. Planning for future sidewalk dining areas should also be addressed in Blue Ash Road streetscape designs to provide adequate spacing along the sidewalk areas for both an outdoor dining area and adequate pedestrian walkway corridors.

### Recommended Streetscape Design Considerations to Promote a Walkable Business District

#### Designated Space

Pedestrian facilities should be well delineated, signed, and marked.

#### Security and Visibility

It is important to design a safe and secure environment for pedestrians. Lighting, increased visibility, open sight-lines, access to police and emergency vehicles.

#### Neighborhood Traffic Calming

Narrowed streets using center medians, traffic circles, curb bump-outs, neck-downs, and other techniques can lower vehicle speeds and create safer conditions for pedestrians.

#### Lively Public Spaces

Secure, attractive, and active spaces provide focal points in the Deer Park community where people can gather and interact. Pedestrian plazas and providing connectivity to Chamberlin Park are examples.

#### Pedestrian Furnishings

Providing amenities, such as benches, restrooms, drinking fountains, artwork and other elements, creates a more attractive and functional environment for pedestrians.

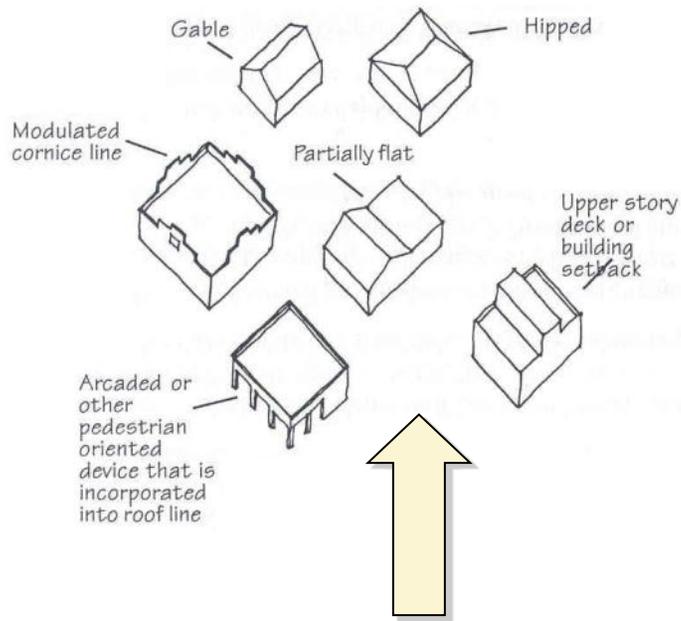
#### Street Trees and Landscaping

Street trees bring human scale to the street environment. Landscaping and flowers in planting strips, containers, and other areas soften surrounding hard edges of buildings and parking lots and add life, color, and texture to the pedestrian's field of vision.

#### Proper Streetscape Maintenance

Frequent cleanup and repair on a regular basis ensures ongoing, consistent use.

## Architectural Design Elements



### Roof Design

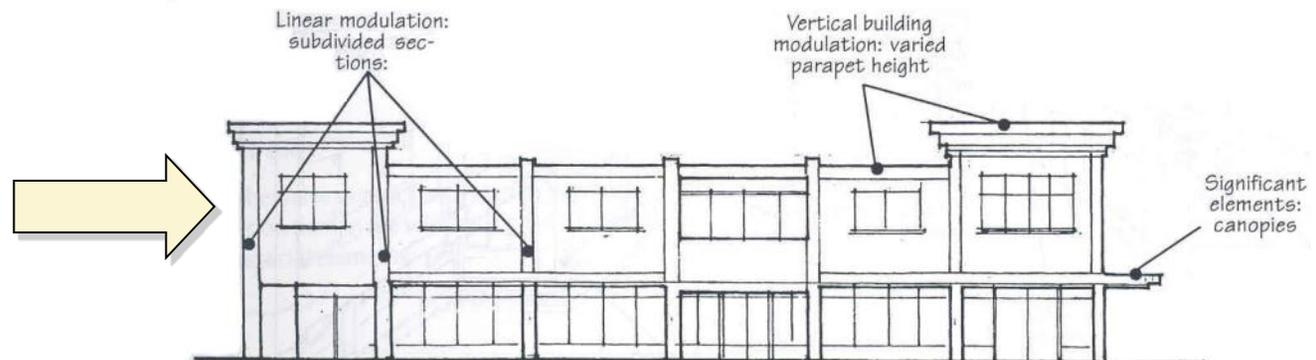
In order to create lasting character within the Business District, flat roofs containing no architectural treatments should be prohibited for new commercial, residential and mixed-use building construction. The illustration shown above depicts selected roof styles that should be incorporated into the Business District design guidelines. Additional elements may be considered such as roof dormers or widened eaves.

### Building Façade Design

New redevelopment projects should be designed in a manner that furthers the effort to create a unique character for the Business District areas. One method to achieve this is the adoption of building design guidelines. Guidelines should be flexible enough to provide the developer ample opportunity to design for the market while maintaining minimum exterior material requirement and other architectural elements to produce a cohesive look and feel for the corridor area. The illustration shown here depicts the use of suggested architectural elements for a multi-tenant redevelopment project.

### Guiding Business District Design Principals

- All new construction and existing building façade replacement within the district should be constructed of natural materials including brick, stone, wood. Cement siding products may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- New construction should be or appear to be a maximum of three stories in height. Additional commercial and residential uses are encouraged on the second and third stories.
- Ground floor commercial (office/retail) is encouraged along principal roads.
- Shared mail boxes and newspaper delivery points should be encouraged for new construction.
- Building facades should have ample windows that can be seen into, with darkly tinted windows discouraged.
- Front porches may be used to create a strong rhythm and to provide shelter for pedestrians, as well as outdoor seating for restaurant uses.
- Building character and scale should compliment and strengthen the Business District character.
- The usage of metal sided buildings as façades for primary structures should be avoided, especially in highly visible areas within the Business District.



## Business District Sign Guidelines

The City implemented a comprehensive set of zoning standards for new and existing signs within the City in 2008. It is strongly urged that the sign regulations be enforced to promote uniform and aesthetically pleasing commercial corridors. The strict enforcement of these guidelines is a critical element to the overall transformation of the Business District corridor areas and ultimately will serve to increase Deer Park's economic development efforts. Below are a few sign design guidelines that have been implemented into the Deer Park Zoning Code:

- Lower, monument style signs are preferred where visibility from the right-of-way is not an issue. Preferred monument signs are low, horizontal with raised lettering set off by flowers, shrubs, or lawn.
- Sign materials should relate to the materials and style of the building they serve.
- Plastic signs, banners, or flags that include loud colors, particularly colors not pertaining to the building materials or style should be prohibited.
- All signs should be architecturally integrated with their surroundings in terms of size, shape, color texture, and lighting so that they are complementary to the overall design of the buildings.
- The number of signs per building façade should be limited to the fewest necessary to clearly identify businesses located within.
- All signs are to be maintained properly such that they are always in clean, working condition and the copy is not obscured or damaged.



Projecting Wall Sign



Sandwich Board Sign



Awning Sign



Channel Letter Wall Sign



Wall Sign



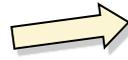
Channel Letter Wall Sign

## Preferred Sign Types

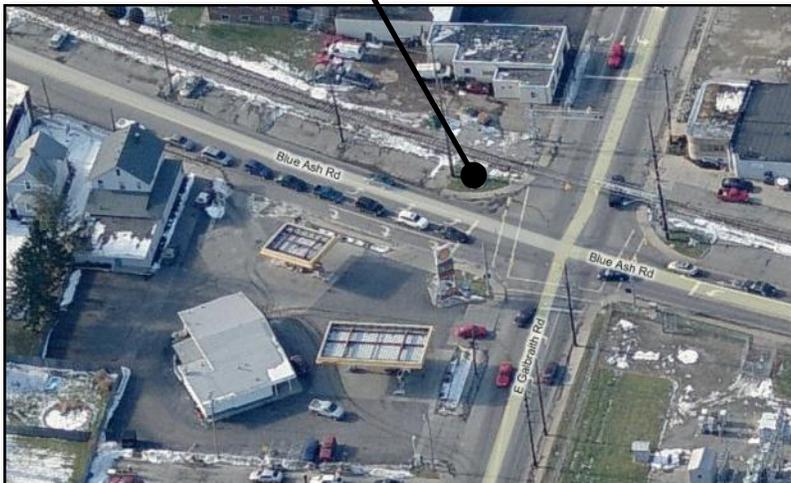
Business District Gateway Plan

Deer Park Business District  
Entryway Location

This gateway corner is currently occupied by an existing City of Deer Park identification sign and small planting area shown to the left. It is suggested that a new sign and landscaped entryway feature be constructed in this general location within the existing City owned right-of-way area. This gateway feature can transform this corner into the “front door” for the Business District and set the tone for the character and sense of place theme for the district.



Conceptual Deer Park Business District Gateway Rendering



Existing City Gateway Signage

Business District Gateway Plan



**Primary Business District Entryway (Southern Location)**

This irregular shaped corner is identified as a potential joint southern gateway opportunity between Deer Park and the Village of Silverton. This corner represents the gateways to both Deer Park's Business District to the north and the Silverton Renaissance District to the south. Long term, this corridor stretching from the Plainfield Road and Montgomery Road intersection in Silverton to the Blue Ash Road and Galbraith Road intersection in Deer Park, may be viewed to potential shoppers and developers as a single business and entertainment district. The placement of a joint identification sign could assist in asserting each Community's unique identity while promoting the overall corridor.

**Joint Gateway Project with the Village of Silverton**

During the initial comprehensive planning process, a joint planning session was held with the Village of Silverton Comprehensive Plan Committee in 2008. One of the joint efforts discussed at the session was the construction of a sign and landscape feature that could identify both Deer Park and Silverton in addition to promoting the Blue Ash corridor and Plainfield Road corridor. The municipal boundaries are irregularly shaped at this point along this corridor section. The site discussed is located in Silverton and provides enough area to design a gateway feature that can serve both municipalities.

One consideration discussed was the importance of creating a sign and landscaping plan that complements both Cities' efforts in their redevelopment and streetscape plans while affording some flexibility for each City to maintain an individual identity.

### Street Banner Program



Consideration should be given to expanding the current street banner program. Banners should be placed on new light poles or other similar structures to promote Deer Park events and add character to the Business District. The program should continue to be subsidized by the business community through providing advertising opportunities on the banners.

### Public Art Displays



A public art program is a method that would create a unique character for the Blue Ash Road and Galbraith Road corridor areas. Municipal art programs vary greatly but most provide the opportunity for local artists to showcase their art in a highly visible public space. Some programs rotate works of art on a scheduled basis while other programs are more permanent. Public art displays placed in strategic areas of the corridor areas would serve to create a fresh and progressive tone for the corridor streetscape.

### Business District Identity Strategies

#### Streetscape Lighting



The use of small “bee lights” on trees and street light poles on a year round basis creates a unique experience for both the visitors of the business district and the vehicular passengers traveling through the business district. This lighting approach brings positive attention to the public spaces and invokes a higher sense of pedestrian usability and safety in the evening.